



Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center (LLC) Frequently Asked Questions



Mission Statement

The Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center actively promotes a learning culture to enhance and sustain safe and effective work practices in the wildland fire community. The Center provides opportunities and resources to foster collaboration among all fire professionals, facilitates their networks, provides access to state-of-the-art learning tools and links learning to training.

www.wildfirelessons.net

Q1: What is the Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center (LLC)?

A1: The Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center (LLC) is a cutting-edge knowledge resource center for the entire wildland fire community. The LLC is located at the National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute (NAFRI) in Tucson, Arizona. The LLC provides innovative strategies, processes and tools to assist the entire wildland fire community in performing more safely and effectively—using both past and present lessons.

Q2: What is the LLC's mission?

A2: The Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center actively promotes a learning culture to enhance and sustain safe and effective work practices across the entire the wildland fire community. The LLC provides opportunities and resources to foster collaboration among all fire professionals, facilitates their networks, provides access to state-of-the-art learning tools and links learning to training. Its goal is to help prevent loss of life and serious injury, manage risk wisely and ensure safer and more effective work practices in the wildland fire community.

Q3: How is the LLC organized?

A3: The LLC consists of full-time staff located at NAFRI in Tucson, Arizona, remote staff working in the Northeast and Pacific Northwest, as well as a variety of consultants and contractors stationed across the country who support the mission and objectives of the LLC. The LLC works in cooperation with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and its committees (including the Fuels Management Committee), Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team (FFAST), the National Association of State Foresters (NASF), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and several others.

A special LLC advisory group, comprised of a diverse team of field and middle-level representatives as well as senior-level leaders, provides independent guidance and feedback regarding a wide variety of topics that the LLC strives to address. This advisory group guidance includes input from the federal Washington, D.C. level, insights from the academic and research arena, and helpful feedback from the state and local level perspective. In addition, the LLC works through NAFRI and other national and state wildland fire training centers across the country to continually integrate lessons learned and effective practices into the wildland fire training curriculum.



Q4: When and why was the LLC established?

A4: The LLC was established in 2002. However, the need for the LLC became clear after the TriData Wildland Firefighter Safety Awareness Study—initiated after 14 firefighters tragically perished in Colorado’s 1994 South Canyon Fire. Two other primary motivations combined to help establish today’s LLC:

1. The realization that the wildland fire community is a diverse group that encompasses thousands of individuals and organizations at the field and management level.
2. A recommendation from NAFRI for incorporating lessons learned and effective practices into the fire training curriculum.

Q5: Why is the LLC needed?

A5: The wildland fire community is a diverse population that encompasses hundreds of organizations at the field and management levels—including federal and state agencies, state and local fire departments, non-governmental organizations associated with wildland fire and emergency response, and related businesses. Before the LLC was established, agencies and organizations in the wildland fire community collected information and learned from the past. This knowledge, however, was widely scattered and new practices were not universally adopted.

Q6: How does the LLC operate?

A6: The LLC facilitates networking among the wildland fire community and shares knowledge through Web-based tools, educational seminars, newsletters and publications, videos, workshops, interviews and case studies. Since 2002, Lessons Learned Center staff members have attended hundreds of conferences (both domestic and international), provided briefings, presentations, and have significantly increased the presence of the LLC through face-to-face contact. The LLC routinely presents at conferences and workshops throughout the country, and staffs an informational exhibit at the majority of these events.

Q7: What is the LLC’s process for fostering organizational learning throughout the wildland fire community?

A7: To help encourage and strengthen this across-the-board wildland fire community organizational learning, the LLC has been organized around three key focus areas:

1. **Collection and Analysis:** The Center uses several methods to acquire lessons and effective practices, primarily through: After Action Reviews (AAR) and AAR Rollups, Information Collection Teams (ICT), wildland fire community surveys, interviews, reports and reviews, incident case studies, success stories, staff rides, sand table exercises and benchmarking. Once this information is acquired, it is analyzed by subject-matter experts.
2. **Knowledge Management/Retention:** The LLC’s four popular Web sites—wildfirelessons.net, myfirecommunity.net, imtcenter.net and myfirevideos.net—serve as the backbone for retaining wildland fire knowledge for today’s wildland fire professional.
3. **Knowledge Sharing/Transfer:** The LLC has found that the primary method for successfully sharing wildland fire knowledge is through the networks of professional wildland firefighters who work within the various organizations and communities of practice.



Q8: What are some of the key focus areas for the LLC?

A8: The LLC’s staff believes that by acquiring, interpreting, transferring, and retaining wildland fire knowledge, positive organizational change will result as we act on what we know. This is done within preparedness, suppression, fuels management, fire ecology, mitigation as well as under the all-hazard response umbrella.

To help foster this organizational learning process, the LLC works with both formal and informal wildland fire community factions to:

- Cultivate positive relationships with recognized institutions in the wildland fire community,
- Demonstrate the center’s value as a venue for organized problem-solving and as a resource for implementing strategies, and
- Cultivate “communities of practice” from the informal networks of professionals who share a common concern or passion about a topic and who enhance their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on a regular basis.

What is the interagency wildland fire community?

The interagency wildland fire community includes: the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and the National Association of State Foresters.

